

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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P 271800Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6623

AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ATHENS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS PRIORITY

USMISSION NATO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LISBON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY OSLO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY

S E C R E T DUBLIN 583

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EEC, PFOR, PO, EI

SUBJECT: US/EC CONSULTATIONS: PORTUGAL

REF: DUBLIN 555 (NOTAL)

1. IN COURSE OF CONVERSATION WITH IRISH POLITICAL DIRECTOR NOEL
DORR MARCH 27, WE ASKED FOR LATEST THINKING ON PORTUGUESE SIT-
UATION. HE REPLIED THAT, AS WE WOULD HAVE SEEN FROM FONMIN FITZ-

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GERALD'S LETTER TO THE SECRETARY, THE IRISH SHARE OUR CONCERN WITH

EVENTS IN PORTUGAL. AT THE MOMENT, HOWEVER, IT WAS "NOT POSSIBLE" TO MAKE AN APPROACH IN LISBON ON BEHALF OF THE EC. (WHILE DORR DID NOT SPECIFICALLY SAY THAT PARIS WAS BLOCKING AN EC APPROACH, WE GOT THIS CLEAR IMPRESSION FROM THE CONVERSATION.) THE OTHER POSSIBILITY WOULD BE FOR IRELAND TO MAKE A BILATERAL DEMARCHE, BUT DORR FRANKLY THOUGHT THAT IRELAND DID NOT CARRY MUCH WEIGHT IN LISBON AND "AN INDIVIDUAL APPROACH WOULD NOT BE MISSED." DORR ALSO COMMENTED THAT THE "IMMEDIATE FOCUS OF CONCERN" HAD NOW PASSED, SINCE THE NEW PORTUGUESE CABINET HAD ALREADY BEEN NAMED. ON THE OTHER HAND, ELECTIONS ARE STILL COMING UP, AND DORR THOUGH IT POSSIBLE THAT SOMETHING USEFUL COULD BE SAID TO THE PROTUGUESE IN THAT CONTEXT.

2. DORR NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT THE OTHER EC COUNTRIES HAVE STILL NOT PROVIDED ANSWERS TO IRELAND'S QUESTIONS. TWO IN PARTICULAR REMAINED IMPORTANT:

(A) IS IT POSSIBLE THAT AN EC DEMARCH MIGHT ACTUALLY CAUSE A REACTION FROM THE MILITARY THAT WOULD DAMAGE THE STANDING OF THE MODERATES IN THE LISBON GOVERNMENT? IN THIS CONNECTION, DORR SAID THE IRISH WOULD BE MORE RELAXED IF THEY KNEW WHO OR WHAT HAD GIVEN THE GERMANS THEIR CAUSE FOR CONCERN. IF SOARES OR ANOTHER MODERATE MINISTER HAD REQUESTED AN EC APPROACH, THEN OF COURSE IT COULD BE ASSUMED THAT THE APPROACH WOULD BENEFIT THE MODERATES.

(B) WHERE DO THE SOVIETS FIT IN? THE GERMAN REFERENCE TO "PRAGUE '48" HAD NATURALLY RAISED SOME EYEBROWS. IT IMPLIED THAT THE SOVIETS WERE PLAYING AN AGGRESSIVE ROLE IN PORTUGAL. THE IRISH ARE PUZZLED BY THIS, HOWEVER, AS THEY WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THE SOVIETS WOULD NOT WISH TO MAKE THAT KIND OF TROUBLE AT THIS TIME. FROM SEVERAL COMMENTS DORR MADE, WE GATHERED THAT HE WAS NOT SATISFIED WITH BRIEFINGS FROM IRELAND'S EC PARTNERS ON NATO DISCUSSIONS.

3. COMMENT: IRISH NOW APPEAR CAUTIOUSLY WILLING TO BE HELPFUL BUT NATURALLY CANNOT MOVE UNLESS THERE IS UNANIMITY IN EC. IN EC COUNCILS, THEY ARE PROBABLY LISTENING RATHER THAN PRESSING STRONGLY FOR A MANDATE. THEY MIGHT BE PERSUADED TO PLAY A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IF THEIR QUESTIONS COULD BE ANSWERED MORE FULLY. THEY ARE CLEARLY AFRAID THAT, AS A SMALL POWER OUTSIDE NATO, THEY ARE NOT GETTING ALL THE INFORMATION THEY NEED TO AVOID MISTAKES.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DEMARCHE, FOREIGN RELATIONS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975DUBLIN00583
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750108-0263
From: DUBLIN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750311/aaaaajec.tel
Line Count: 108
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 75 DUBLIN 555
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16 APR 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <24 SEP 2003 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: US/EC CONSULTATIONS: PORTUGAL
TAGS: PFOR, PO, EI, EEC, (DORR, NOEL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006